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Translated for this Journal.

### Of Modern Instrumentation.

[From the German of A. B. MARX.]

The new construction of the orchestra has penetrated everywhere, especially into the Opera, and has everywhere exerted its influence, an influence of the most important kind. It has formed itself gradually, and without preconceived plan; BERLIOZ is not its founder, but its completer; he is the intelligence of this movement, of which MEYERBEER and WAGNER are the most significant, and—if you once admit the principle—the most inspired adherents.

The first peculiarity which one remarks in the new orchestration, is the greatly increased variety of instruments, especially of the wind band, thereby necessitating a strengthening of the mass of stringed instruments. Hence there is opposed to the vocal parts (in Opera and Cantata) a mass of sound, which now forces the voices upward and to extravagant accentuation, and now stifles the voices and crowds even the chorus into violent outbursts, leading the composer to employ an unfavorable choice of instruments if he would have a solo penetrate through so much noise. Thus Meyerbeer in a certain mournful love-song in G minor, (I think in *Robert le Diable*), uses the trumpet for a pathetic cantilena; the same thing might be pointed out in AUBER and others.

The second feature is the unmaning of the trumpet and the French horn (they have even begun upon the trombone) by the introduction of the valve. So soon as one ceases to consult truth, the only characteristic quality that there is left becomes irrecoznizable and unendurable; for character is any nature faithful to itself and complete in itself, which cannot operate, cannot avail through any thing other than itself. Now in the whole series of tone-personifications there are

no characters of a more decided stamp than the heroic trumpet, the dreamy *Wald-horn* in its natural state. Even the limitation and incompleteness of their scale of tones is something peculiar to their character and nature; Achilles with the eloquence and cunning of Ulysses were no more Achilles; the trusty, sturdy mountaineer cannot have the many-sidedness of the polished, short-winded denizen of the city; just so little can the trumpet have the flexibility of the clarinet, or the horn the supple serviceableness of the bassoon. The character of those instruments, their very limitation as to the power of producing all tones of the scale, has constantly challenged the appreciative composer to invent characteristic passages, and has quite frequently rewarded his fidelity with the most happy inspirations. By the very fact, that they have drawn these natural beings out of their native and appropriate tone-element, that they have tried to refashion their naïve peculiarity into an imitation of all sorts of creatures, have the composers entangled themselves in a mesh of half-ness and of falsehood. The use of valves and pistons has certainly extended the domain of tones; but the new tones are partially impure; the characteristic, pure tone-color is entirely blurred and sophisticated, the power of tone entirely broken.

The third trait is the introduction of the so-called soft or mellow brass band—the Cornets, Sax-horns, Tubas—as you may please to call them—into the orchestra.

By no means do I declare war here against newly invented instruments, or old instruments restored; it would ill become me, who have found one such at least (the chromatic tenor horn, in my oratorio "*Moses*") indispensable. If our masters down to BEETHOVEN have done great things without it, it does not follow that we should despise means which they could not use, because they did not know of them,—any more than that they should have confined themselves to the more limited means of BACH and HANDEL. Some of the new instruments have already found a really artistic application (as the bass clarinet in Wagner's *Lohengrin*, where its place could hardly be supplied in any other way); others may attain to like importance, who knows how soon and where? Even the application of them in whole bands or choirs may somehow or other become necessary. Every medium may possibly, for some artistic moment, be both fit and indispensable—and then it is the right one. Nevertheless the use of this new family of brass, as now employed, must appear questionable, nay, generally speaking, a perversion. For this, together with the introduction of the valve in horns and trumpets, obliterates the characteristic features of

the orchestra, so that you hardly recognize them. And this consideration outweighs any favoring of single moments.

In the old orchestra the quartet of strings and the wind band, the latter including the brass (horns, trumpets, trombones, with the kettle drums) and the reed band (clarinet, oboes, &c.),—formed decided opposites. Splendor, power, warlike appeal, and solemn pomp lay in the trumpets and trombones; each band or family, each instrument, had its distinguishable character. Was it required to mitigate the opposition, or suspend it, instantly the French horns of themselves stepped in between the stern brass and the reeds; the insight of the composer found in covering the heavy voices by more mild ones, in veiling them by accessory parts, in a hundred turns, continually new and even genial means, which operated more excitingly upon his own and upon his hearers' mind, than would be possible by any mere material increase of mass.

And now stepped in the choir of cornets and of tubas. Even to the eye their conically widened, speaking-tube-like, intestinally winding bodies, interrupted by the weight of their cast metal valves and choked in their vibration, suggested beforehand the idea of a choked and suddenly outbursting, a muffled and yet violent sound; just as the shape of trumpets, horns and trombones indicates their quality of tone. This choir, particularly by the bastard nature of its sound, weakens the opposition of the brass and reeds. The cornets, which are neither horn nor clarinet, and yet resemble both (as if a painter should combine blue, green and yellow, and shade them into one another); the large tubas, half trombone, half horn-like, and neither altogether;—add to which the choking and muffling of the trumpets and the horns;—all this veils and blunts the sharpness of the character, allows the significant diversities of the orchestra to melt into a homogeneous mass, and merely increases the fullness, but not at all the power of sound. The drawn sword is mighty; in the scabbard it is thicker and heavier to be sure, but it has lost its conquering power of sharpness.

Once increase the mass of tone, and you have changed all relations. We artists are "dependent on the creatures we have made." New voices once acknowledged, they are eager to take part; when they have once spoken out, their weight of sound hangs upon every step; the masses with their swell and diminution (from a few instruments to many, to the whole, and the reverse) become broader; the finer execution of the shifting instrumental dialogue is crowded back; the spiritual yields to the material; the orchestra gives up its thoroughly soul-fraught dramatic

character, that costliest legacy of HAYDN and BEETHOVEN, in order to resound like a many-voiced, sublimely powerful lyre (organ, if that sounds better.) Even in the choice of the principal voices care must be had, to mould them to the more sonorous, although often inappropriate instruments; or, in those grotesque Meyerbeer-ish alternations of one or two solo instruments (it might even be the piccolo and contrabasso) to conspire with the most wide-mouthed massive *tutti*. The banishment of certain important instruments goes hand in hand with this. Thus the characteristic Basset-horn is crowded out by the more flat and meagre Alto Clarinet; and so the not very sonorous, but yet often deeply impressive Contrafagotto has had to give way to the bull-voiced Bass Tuba.

Would you note these consequences of the new construction of the orchestra in a simpler body, consider the organization of Military Music, so far as it can be learned from the Prussian, Austrian and Russian army. With the skilfulness of our military bands and their directors, which seems greatly improved in comparison with earlier times, we are not now concerned. What from an artistic point of view now can and must be demanded of military music in general? In the first place (as it seems to me) a warlike feeling; then a characteristic expression for the kind of troops to which each corps of music belongs. Now supposing this last requirement to be fulfilled out of the means of the old orchestra, we should have for harnessed troops of heavy dragoons, trumpets (high and low), trombones and kettle-drums; for light dragoons trumpets, (mostly high, the deep ones only as bass); for the Jagers, horns, (perhaps those old primitive forest signal horns, which howled so wildly in the ears of the French in 1813, perhaps also the smaller ones, more trumpet-like, of the French and Belgian *voltigeurs*);—for the many-sided, far-stretching infantry, besides the drums, the full Janissary music, with the screaming clarinets at the head, but supported also and more highly colored by the brass. The cavalry music would present itself far more simple and more poor in tones; but its very peculiarity would consist in those natural tones and natural harmonies, in which, according to the example of all natural singers and all masters, the simple, native, fresh, downright Heroic ever finds its truest utterance; but that very poverty of tones would drive the composer to a strong marking of the rhythm, to the most peculiar expression of will and courage, of strong impetus and firm resistance, so far as any excitable spirit lives in him.

I step back out of that half-foreign sphere. Let any one examine for himself, who feels concerned to know, and see how much of those requirements is fulfilled or given up, since the troop of valve instruments has placed itself at the head of all sorts of martial music and has trained the harnessed brass band to each opera aria and to all the chromatic sighs of sweetish sentimentality. In a long peace the brightest sword rusts; the valves, brutal and tame, are the fit voices for our carrying on of war.

#### Mlle. Paradies.

MARIA THERESA PARADIES, a remarkable composer and eminent pianiste, was born in Vienna, the 15th May, 1759. Stricken with blindness at the early age of five years, she found

in the study of music a consolation for her great misfortune. She evinced the most singular aptitude for this art, and was moreover endowed with marvellous facility for the acquirement of languages and sciences. Mlle. Paradies was equally familiar with Italian, German, French and English, well versed in the inductive sciences, a proficient in geography and history, danced with grace, and possessed such extraordinary facility of conception, and so tenacious a memory, that she played at chess, regulating her own moves according to the play of her adversary, as if she could have seen the board herself. Koze-luch and Righini were her masters for the piano-forte and singing; and she learned composition from the chapel-master, Freibert, receiving the advice of Salieri in the dramatic department. She was only eleven years of age when the Empress Maria Theresa granted her a pension of 250 florins, after having heard her play some of the sonatas and fugues of Bach, with rare perfection. In 1784, Paradies set out on her travels, visited Linz, Salzburg, Munich, Spire, Mannheim, Switzerland, and Paris, in which latter city she played with extraordinary success at one of the Concerts Spirituels in 1785. From Paris she proceeded to London, where she achieved a decided triumph. The most celebrated artists of the period—among others, Abel, Fischer, and Salomon—considered it an honor to assist in her concerts. On her return from England, Paradies went to Holland, then to Brussels, Berlin, and Dresden, and was everywhere received with marked approbation at her public performances. In 1786, she returned to Vienna. She there applied herself to composition and teaching, published a variety of instrumental pieces, and wrote several operas, which were favorably received at Vienna and Prague. Her house became the rendezvous of the most eminent and distinguished persons of Vienna; foreigners solicited as the highest favor, to be introduced to her; and all were equally captivated by the charms of her conversation and the amenity of her manners. This remarkable woman died at Vienna on the 1st of February, 1824, at the age of sixty-five. In 1791, she produced at Vienna *Ariadne at Naxos*, an opera in two acts; and this was followed by *Ariadne and Bacchus*, a duo-drama in one act, a continuation of the foregoing opera. In 1792, Mlle. Paradies gave at the National Theatre of Vienna, *Le Candidat Instituteur*, an operetta in one act; and in 1797, a grand opera, entitled *Rinaldo and Armida*, at Prague. A grand cantata of her composition, on the death of Louis XVI., which was printed with pianoforte accompaniment, was brought out at Vienna in 1794. She had already published her funeral cantata on the death of the Emperor Leopold. Among the other compositions of Paradies, may be mentioned *Six Sonatas* for the harpsichord, Op. 1 (Paris, Imbault); *Six Sonatas*, Op. 2 (ditto); *Twelve Italian Canzonets*, with accompaniment, for pianoforte (London, Bland); and *Leonora de Burger* (Lieder, Vienna).

FETIS.

#### Emidee, the Negro Musician.

[From the Autobiography of James Silk Buckingham.]

He was born in Guinea, on the west coast of Africa, sold into slavery to some Portuguese traders, taken by them to the Brazils when quite a boy, and ultimately came to Lisbon with his owner or master. Here he manifested such a love for music, that he was supplied with a violin and a teacher; and in the course of three or four years he became sufficiently proficient to be admitted as one of the second violins in the orchestra of the opera at Lisbon. While thus employed, it happened that Sir Edward Pellow, in his frigate the *Indefatigable*, visited the Tagus, and, with some of his officers, attended the opera. They had long wanted for the frigate a good violin player, to furnish music for the sailors' dancing in their evening leisure, a recreation highly favorable to the preservation of their good spirits and contentment. Sir Edward, observing the energy with which the young negro plied his violin in the orchestra, conceived the idea of impressing him for the service. He accordingly instructed one of his lieutenants

to take two or three of the boat's crew, then waiting to convey the officers on board, and, watching the boy's exit from the theatre, to kidnap him, violin and all, and take him off to the ship. This was done, and the next day the frigate sailed; so that all hope of his escape was vain. In what degree of turpitude this differed from the original stealing the youth from his native land, and keeping him in slavery, these gallant officers, perhaps, never condescended to consider. \* \* \*

Poor Emidee was thus forced, against his will, to descend from the higher regions of the music in which he delighted—Gluck, Haydn, Cimarosa, and Mozart, to desecrate his violin to hornpipes, jigs, and reels, which he loathed and detested; and being, moreover, the only negro on board, he had to mess by himself, and was looked down upon as an inferior being—except when playing to the sailors, when he was of course in high favor. As the captain and officers judged, from his conduct and expressions, that he was intensely disgusted with his present mode of life, and would escape at the first possible opportunity, he was never permitted to set his foot on shore for seven long years! and was only released by Sir Edward Pellow being appointed to the command of a line-of-battle ship, *L'Impetueux*, when he was permitted to leave in the harbor of Falmouth, where he first landed, and remained, I believe, till the period of his death.

Here he first began by going out to parties to play the violin, which he did to a degree of perfection never before heard in Cornwall; this led to his being engaged as a teacher, and then a leader at concerts; so that, by degrees, he made rapid progress in reputation and means. Though he was one of the very ugliest negroes I ever remember to have seen, he had charms enough to fascinate a young woman of a respectable tradesman's family, whom he married, and by whom he had a large family of children. Though anticipating by some years the proper period of this narrative, I may mention here, more appropriately than further on, the following anecdote connected with his life. Emidee had composed many instrumental pieces, as quartets, quintets and symphonies for full orchestra, which had been played at the provincial concerts, and were much admired. On my first leaving Falmouth to come to London—about 1807—I brought with me several of these pieces in MS., to submit them to the judgment of London musical professors, in order to ascertain their opinion of their merits. At that period, Mr. Saloman, the well-known arranger of Haydn's symphonies as quintets, was the principal leader of the fashionable concerts at the Hanover Square Rooms. I sought an interview with him, and was very courteously received. I told him the story of Emidee's life; and asked him to get some of his pieces tried. This he promised to do, and soon after I received an intimation from him that he had arranged a party of professional performers, to meet at a certain day and hour at the shop of Mr. Betts, a musical instrument maker, under the piazza of the Royal Exchange, where I repaired at the appointed time; and in an upper room, a quartet, a quintet, and two symphonies with full accompaniments were tried, and all were highly approved. It was then suggested by Mr. Saloman, that Emidee should come to London and give a public performance. But Mr. Betts and all the others thought his color would be so much against him, that there would be a great risk of failure; and that it would be a pity to take him from a sphere in which he was now making a handsome livelihood and enjoying a high reputation, on the risk of so uncertain a speculation. To show, however, the sincerity of their admiration for the man and for his works, they originated on the spot a private subscription, which, being extended for about a week among others of the profession not then present, realized a handsome sum, which I had great pleasure in transmitting to him, with several complimentary letters from those who had been present at the performance of his compositions.

I record these facts with pleasure, as while they speak well for the liberality of the musical profession to their less fortunate brethren, they at the same time offer another splendid proof of the utter



groundlessness of the fallacy which supposes the negro intellect to be incapable of cultivation, on arriving at an equal degree of excellence with that of the whites, if placed under equally favorable circumstances.

**PROGRESS OF CIVILIZATION.**—The St. Paul (Minnesota) *Daily Times* has a musical critic worthy of any oyster house in Broadway. He piles up the passion in truly artistic style. A juvenile fiddler having given a concert in St. Paul, the critic aforesaid was affected in the following manner:—"A passion of most sweet music was rained on us from his deep eyes, a supreme sensation filling the soul brimful, and subduing all thought and feeling within. In the exultation of some passages we could have bowed down and worshipped. He is a great boy. He can't help it. He is the embodied soul of music. You see the article in the flash of his dark, spiritual eye." Pretty tall fiddling we think that must be.—*Atlas*.

### THE DAYS OF JUNE.

BY JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

Not only around our infancy  
Doth heaven with all its splendors lie;  
Daily, with souls that cringe and plot,  
We Sinais climb and know it not.

Over our manhood bend the skies;  
Against our fallen and traitor lives  
The great winds utter prophecies;  
With our faint hearts the mountain strives;  
Its arms outstretched, the druid wood  
Waits with its benediction;  
And to our age's drowsy blood  
Still shouts the inspiring sea.

Earth gets its price for what earth gives us;  
The beggar is taxed for a corner to die in,  
The priest hath his fee who comes and shrives us,  
We bargain for the graves we lie in;  
At the Devil's booth are all things sold,  
Each ounce of dross costs its ounce of gold;  
For a cap and bells our lives we pay,  
Bubbles we earn with a whole soul's tasking:  
'T is heaven alone that is given away,  
'T is only God may be had for the asking;  
There is no price set on the lavish summer,  
And June may be had by the poorest corner.

And what is so rare as a day in June?  
Then, if ever, come perfect days;  
Then Heaven tries the earth if it be in tune,  
And over it softly her warm ear lays:  
Whether we look, or whether we listen,  
We hear life murmur, or see it glisten;  
Every clod feels a stir of might,  
An instinct within it that reaches and towers,  
And, grasping blindly above it for light,  
Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers;  
The flush of life may well be seen  
Thrilling back o'er hills and valleys;  
The cowslip startles in meadows green,  
The buttercup catches the sun in its chalice,  
And there's never a leaf or a blade too mean  
To be some happy creature's palace;  
The little bird sits at his door in the sun,  
Attit like a blossom among the leaves,  
And lets his illumined being o'er-run  
With the deluge of summer it receives;  
His mate feels the eggs beneath her wings,  
And the heart in her dumb breast flutters and sings;  
He sings to the wide world, and she to her nest,—  
In the nice ear of Nature which song is the best?

Now is the high-tide of the year,  
And whatever of life hath ebbed away  
Comes flooding back, with a ripply cheer,  
Into every bare inlet and creek and bay;  
Now the heart is so full that a drop overfills it,  
We are happy now because God so wills it;  
No matter how barren the past may have been,  
'T is enough for us now that the leaves are green;  
We sit in the warm shade and feel right well  
How the sap creeps up, and the blossoms swell;  
We may shut our eyes, but we cannot help knowing

That skies are clear and grass is growing;  
The breeze comes whispering in our ear,  
That dandelions are blossoming near,

That maize has sprouted, that streams are flowing,  
That the river is bluer than the sky,  
That the robin is plastering his house hard by;  
And if the breeze kept the good news back,  
For other couriers we should not lack;

We could guess it all by yon heifer's lowing,—  
And hark! how clear bold chanticleer,  
Warmed with the new wine of the year,  
Tells all in his lusty crowing!

Joy comes, grief goes, we know not how;  
Every thing is happy now,  
Every thing is upward striving;  
'T is as easy now for the heart to be true  
As for grass to be green or skies or to be blue,—  
'T is the natural way of living:

Who knows whither the clouds have fled?  
In the unscarred heaven they leave no wake;  
And the eyes forget the tears they have shed,  
The heart forgets its sorrow and ache;  
The soul partakes the season's youth,  
And the sulphurous rifts of passion and woe  
Lie deep 'neath a silence pure and smooth,  
Like burnt-out craters healed with snow.

### Herr Wagner.—Another Opinion.

[From the London Morning Post.]

In a book entitled *Kunst-werk der Zukunft*, replete with imagination and eloquence, Herr Richard Wagner explains his ideas of Art generally. He says here so many things "novel or strange," that his work might furnish numerous columns to a weekly contemporary, in whose broad sheet a quantity of information regularly appears under the above heading. He thinks the sister arts of dancing (not mere *capering*, but the art of gesture in its highest sense), music and poetry, originally combined by the ancient Greeks, should never have been separated; for this unnatural proceeding rendered impossible that greatest of works, the drama, which united all the modes of expression in one living picture of human life, where each illustrating the other, all could be easily understood by the people (taking this word in its most comprehensive significance), whose senses and sympathies were thus acted upon simultaneously. That to revive true Art, which is to be the mission of the future artist, the cold monumental beauties of sculpture, the special forms and science of music, together with that style of so-called dramatic poetry which, merely displaying acquired learning, dealing with metaphysical subtleties or abstract reasonings, admits not of combination with the sister-arts, must give place to such vital realities as can only be produced by the combination of demonstrative gesture—music based upon the exigencies of tonal expression, and literature whose words are called forth by the requirements of dramatic action, or well up from the heart as the necessary and immediate manifestation of thought, sentiment, or emotion, and colored by all the graces of intonation and vocal inflexion. Separated, says Herr Wagner, these arts are egotistical and incomprehensible to the many; united, they are universal and easily understood. In the former of these states they are the property of a selfish few, in the latter, that of human nature generally. Thus, celebrated modern dancers, like Carlotta Grisi, Ellsler, Rosati, etc., are mere deformed posture-mistresses—wretched *figurantes*, whose only object is to please a depraved multitude by vulgar displays of agility and fascinations of doubtful decency—creatures of heartless luxury, whose performances have no intellectual purpose, no psychological expression, and are, therefore, unnatural, unnecessary, and unartistic. The art of double counterpoint, fugue, and canon is a mere mathematical sport of the understanding—music playing egotistically with itself—and those who excelled in it (nearly all the greatest masters), were, in this respect at least, mere selfish cunning tricksters, whose proceedings bore a strong affinity to the shrewd reckonings of Hebrew speculators in the money market.

Dramatic poets are supremely ridiculous when

they write unactable plays, only fit to be read; and Goethe's *Faust*, driven from the stage by metaphysics, prolixity, and a poodle, affords a striking illustration of this. Art, says Herr Wagner, is not a product of Art—it cannot be taught *ex cathedra*—it grows out of the requirements of civilisation, as civilisation emanates from the exigencies of social man, and stands in the same relation to him that he does to general nature. As man's mind is but the conscious reflection of general nature, and all his true ideas can only be impressions derived from her, so should the true, universal work reproduce these reflected impressions, and be a complete picture of the man himself. Seeking and comparing, imply error; and it is only when the man no longer chooses, but impelled by internal necessity abandons himself to the immediate and natural expression of his ideas, that he is a real artist. If he feel this necessity, he will have something new to tell us—if not, he had best be silent, for arbitrary custom or unnatural abstraction will rule his thoughts, and his work, however skilful, will be egotistical, unnecessary, and meet with no genuine sympathy from the many. The great masters of past times were all necessary (though erroneous in their principles) for they were so many links in the great chain of events; and the gradual progress expressed in their works has led up to the brilliant present, begun by Beethoven and to be continued by Herr Wagner, who proposes to re-unite the three Art-sisters. Although we dissent altogether from many of the doctrines here set forth, it were most unjust not to recognize, in the author of the *Kunst-werk der Zukunft*, an original thinker, full of conscientious earnestness and poetical fancy; and we, therefore, give him that respectful attention which intellect and honesty of purpose should always command. To judge a composer like Herr Wagner in *ex pede Herculeum* fashion, would indeed be unfair; and we can only wonder that a gentleman, who sets out with the principle that the only perfect rule is that which embraces the mimetic, musical and dramatic elements, should expose himself to such misconception as must infallibly arise from a performance of his operative productions in the concert-room, where they must necessarily be deprived of two of their essential properties, and depend only upon one which, according to his own theory, should never stand alone. We must, however, speak of things as we find them, and shall, therefore, endeavor to do as much justice as possible to the works given on this occasion, under what must be considered disadvantageous circumstances. The selection made from our author's compositions was a scene belonging to the opera of *Lohengrin*, the *Knight of the Graal*, the words of which, no less than the music, are from the pen of Herr Wagner.

In one respect the music disappointed us. We expected to find it highly, if not extravagantly original, but failed to remark this quality which, in the latter, even more than the former degree, has been given to it by rumor. We observed no marked individuality of style in the score, no epoch-making innovations, such as the very original literary works of the composer had taught us to look for, but, instead, a succession of very brilliantly instrumented pieces, which contained nothing strikingly new either in rhythm, harmony, or orchestral arrangement. It has been said elsewhere that Herr Wagner's theories have merely been framed to suit his creative abilities; if so, the latter were certainly not by when they were measured, for a worse fit do we not remember to have seen. A great deal of this music is excessive and needlessly luxurious in mere loudness and meretriciousness of sound, as the unhappy dancers whom he castigates so unmercifully are in show; and it assuredly contains as much that is "unnecessary" and "customary," as any modern production with which we are acquainted. Herr Wagner, however, condemns his own music more than we are disposed to do; for, as we have said, it has very great merit in respect of instrumentation, and is also highly dramatic in character, and expressive of the words and action it is meant to illustrate. Strikingly original, however—like, for instance, that of Berlioz—it most certainly is not.

The best part of this selection was the introduction, the clear and beautiful scoring of which betokens an amount of strictly musical "knowledge," and mere "science," which we cannot but wonder the author of the *Kunstwerk der Zukunft* ever condescended to acquire. But Herr Wagner has deigned to learn even more than this, for we understand that he knows the scores of the great though erroneous masters by heart, and can direct a rehearsal of their "progressive" works perfectly well without referring to them. The selection from *Lohengrin*, very favorably received by a highly critical and, we may add, somewhat prejudiced audience, left the impression, at least upon us, that Herr Wagner is a very clever though not a great composer.

### Musical Correspondence.

From NEW YORK.

May 29.—I regret to be obliged to report another very thin audience at the repetition of Mr. EISELDT'S Complimentary Concert last Saturday afternoon. This time there was really no excuse, for the weather was beautiful, and those gentlemen who could leave their business of an afternoon to attend a Philharmonic rehearsal, might have done so just as well on this occasion. Perhaps they could not talk as much at a concert as at a rehearsal (though with some, according to my experience, this seems to make no difference). As it was, the audience consisted mostly of ladies, and such only, I hope, as did not suffer their regret at the absence of the Philharmonic beaux to impair their enjoyment of the music. The general rendition of the latter was even finer than at the first concert. Miss LEHMANN, particularly, sang the Aria from *Fidelio* much better than the week before, and did ample justice to the "Wanderer" by SCHUBERT, which was inserted, for some reason, instead of the "Erliking."

With this concert, in regard to which, as well as its predecessor, we regret exceedingly that it did not better fulfil its purpose, we take leave, for the present of Mr. Eisfeld, who we understand intends to sail next week for Europe. He was to have conducted the German *Liederfest*, which will take place here the end of next month, and has long been busied in making preparations for it; but the necessity of change of climate for him became so obvious, that he was obliged to resign this plan. His place will be filled by Mr. BERGMANN, as you mentioned in your last. Mr. Bergmann has also been elected conductor of the Musical Fund Society, which is waking up after a long nap, and preparing itself for activity next winter. With its concerts under Bergmann, and those of the Philharmonic Society under Eisfeld, we have a rich treat in store for the next season. BORNONIS.

May 30.—The LA GRANGE troupe have now performed four times at the Academy and only once has the house been really full, and then it could not compare with the audiences which "Tell" and *Trovatore* drew. On Friday, and also last night, *Ernani* was given. Mme. La Grange's Elvira was too "Frenchy" for my taste in her acting. Her singing is truly wonderful. The new Ernani, Signor MIRATE, makes a fine appearance and generally acts and sings well. But his voice is no longer fresh. MORELLI was excellent. On Friday the house was full. On that evening as also on all others, the audience was much troubled by the noise of regular *claqueurs* who applauded everything, never minding whom or what they interrupted by their hubbub. They had to be hissed down quite frequently. For to-night *Ernani* is again announced as 'the last performance but four.' On Friday *I Puritani* will be given.

At Niblo's there is the PYNE troupe, "with a poor orchestra and a poorer chorus," as I am told.—

HACKETT, at the Metropolitan last night, produced a version of *Massaniello* which he announces as a "grand operatic and melo-dramatic ballet." Why "operatic" I cannot say, as there is not a single vocalist mentioned in the bills.

The Buckleys go on in their good work. They have produced a version of *Norma*, which, though it is a broad burlesque, still retains all the best music.—From the following card you will see that there is an opportunity offered for some of our resident composers.

CHANCE FOR NATIVE TALENT.—The Messrs. Buckley, grateful for the liberal patronage which has attended their untiring endeavors to present entertainment in a degree of excellence above the mediocrity usually characterizing comic minstrelsy and burlesque; and anxious still further to elevate their reputation for superiority in catering to the taste of a refined and intellectual public, give notice that they are now prepared to treat with American composers for the production of original operas, adapted to the peculiarities of their Company. They must embrace in their caste, rôles of 1st and 2nd tenors, soprano and contralto, bass and barytone; and all accepted Operas will be produced under the most favorable circumstances, regardless of expense. Communications in relation to the subject will meet with prompt attention.

JAMES BUCKLEY & SON.

I hope Mr. FRY and Mr. BRISTOW (who, by the way, is conducting the English opera orchestra) will pay attention to the above. Perhaps, as the Academy will not give the *Stabat Mater*, Mr. F. can change it to a comic opera and let the Buckleys produce it. Some parts are said to be comic enough already. But seriously, I am anxious to know with what responses advertisement will meet. R.

### Musical Chat-Chat.

There is a curious anecdote connected with the first performance of ROSSINI'S "William Tell" at the Académie Royale in Paris, 1829. The authors of the libretto were Messieurs JOUY and HYPOLITE BIS. Immense was the success of this (then and now) last opera of the maestro, and after the performance the enthusiastic orchestra went to serenade him. The crowd, delighted with the music, cried out *bis! bis!* (equivalent to our *encore*). When Mons. Bis, the librettist, who resided in the same house, and fancied that they meant to call him out, appeared bowing and smiling at the window, was very sorry to inform them of the absence of his colleague, M. Jouy, hoped they would accept the heart-felt thanks of his collaborateurs and himself for the kind reception given to the new work, and retired amid the shouts and laughter of the crowd, who relished the joke as keenly as the serenade.

A newspaper in Frankfort-on-the-Main, (April 29) congratulates its readers on the prospect of hearing at the next week's Philharmonic concert the pianist ALFRED JAELL, who had already been admired there as a boy in '49. It advises them to make the most of this opportunity, since Jaell thinks of terminating his concert-giving career and settling down domestically (*häuslich*) in Paris. What are we to understand?

The *fête* of the Immaculate Conception has been celebrated with great splendor at Naples. MERCADANTE composed a hymn for the occasion, which was performed in the open air by 1573 musicians, of whom 893 were instrumentists, and 680 vocalists. The Neapolitan journals declare that the like was never heard. . . . A curious law-suit has just taken place in Paris, showing that the law is sometimes a ruthless interferer with the rights of woman and of song-birds. "Mme. LABORDE, it appears, does not live in the most loving manner with him she has chosen for her husband. The lady has a voice, which she looks on as her private and peculiar property, 'settled to her own use,' as the lawyers say. M. Laborde thinks otherwise, and declares that her voice, as well as all else pertaining to her, belongs

to him, her lawful husband. The lady was restive, and made an engagement with M. CROSKIER for the Grand Opera, whereupon the husband appeals to the tribunal of justice, which he prays will prevent his wife singing without his consent. The tribunal has decided, and adjudged the husband to be in the right, having forbidden Mme. Laborde to accept an engagement without first receiving the authority of her liege lord." . . . The story that FANNY CERITO, the danseuse, has been studying music and singing, and is about to make her debut as *prima donna* at Covent Garden, is pronounced a *canard*. . . . M. ORTOLAN is the "savoury name" of one of the present French operetta composers;—is he too a descendant of blithe Bob-o'-Lincoln? Speaking of names, we notice among the performers of Verdi's *Rigoletto* in Vienna lately, one Sig. CARRION as the tenor. Not so bad, considering the plot and music of that opera. Again, the Spanish dramatist, from whom was borrowed the grim plot of *Il Trovatore*, rejoices in the cut-throat name of GARGIA GUTTERIEZ.

A London correspondent gives the following information about recent changes among the leading Feuilletonists of the Paris newspapers:

"The theatrical critic for the *Moniteur* during some years past was M. THIERRY, a gentleman whose good taste, able criticism, and invariable courtesy are well known. The musical critic for the same ministerial journal during some years has been M. P. A. FIORENTINO, who, under the *nom de plume* of A. de ROVRAY, has, week by week, delighted his readers with *feuilletons* second to none for wit, humor, good sense, and critical acumen. The musical critic for the *Constitutionnel* was the same M. P. A. FIORENTINO; the dramatic critic, M. LIREUX, whose pen, light, gay, and airy, could discourse about nothing better than that of any other man in Europe, save, perhaps, the great and immortal JULES JANIN, who for some twenty years has never missed a single Monday in the *Journal des Debats*. The musical and dramatic critic of the *Presse* was M. THEOPHILE GAUTIER, than whom there is no abler writer at present living in France. So much for the past.—Now for the changes which have taken place. M. Thierry has left the *Moniteur*, and M. Th. Gautier has supplied his place, so that he is now the dramatic, and M. P. A. Fiorentino, under the signature of A. de Rovray, the music critic of that journal. M. Lireux has quitted the *Constitutionnel*, and M. Fiorentino assumes his duties, and becomes dramatic as well as musical critic for that paper. M. NESTOR ROQUEPLAN succeeds M. Th. Gautier on the *Presse*.

A correspondent of the N. Y. *Evening Post*, under the head of "Art Gossip in Boston," has much to say of those private musical parties to which we have alluded. The following passage will be appreciated by a number of our readers:

"The Mendelssohn Quintette Club have done much in this way at private soirées through the whole season, both in the city proper and in the suburban cities, and have led great numbers into an intimate knowledge and love of the beautiful chamber music of the great masters. Can any more perfect enjoyment to a refined taste be conceived than such as your correspondent cannot but recall, as often experienced at the mansion of a gentleman of this city, of rare taste in all the arts, and in whose hospitable parlors, while listening to the divinest music, you at the same time may feast your eyes and your soul by gazing on the most beautiful works of modern painters, where the *chefs-d'œuvres* of Overbeck and Ary Scheffer are before your eyes, and the Divine Poet and Beatrice in Paradise almost seem to move before you to the sweet sounds, as you look at them on the breathing (no, not breathing—Beatrice is a spirit, without the breath of life, and Dante dares not) canvas of Scheffer. You may turn to the Divine Com-



edy and read the page if you will, for the poets are here, and it will lose nothing by being read in such surroundings. After such an evening with musicians, painters and poets, (and some of each, too, of no little note among the guests,) one cannot but have pleasant dreams at night and many pleasant memories hereafter."

## Music Abroad.

### Paris.

April 21.—(From the Correspondence of the London Musical World.)—There is at last an effectual break in the dull monotony which has so long characterized the musical world of Paris. M. ADAM's new opera, *Le Cour de Célimène*, has been produced at the Opera-Comique; and the *Lisette* of M. ORTOLAN (savoury name), has seen the light at the Théâtre-Lyrique. Both have succeeded, and each deserved the success it obtained, which is of the quiet and mild, rather than the enthusiastic and violent description.

The fair Célimène is a countess of noble birth and ancient descent, endowed with beauty, wit and wealth, tempered by the coquetry and flightiness which form the basis of her character. Her sister, the Baroness, possesses equal beauty, less wealth, and more steadiness.

The countess resides in her chateau in Brittany and is surrounded by a court of aspirants to her hand and fortune, consisting of one commander, one chevalier, four youths, four full-grown, and four elderly gentlemen. To each of these she holds out some hopes of success; but, in her secret heart, the commander is the favored lover; and he, at first divided between the charms and merits of the two sisters, puts their names into a hat, and, drawing forth that of Célimène, determines to devote his attention to her. The chevalier is a Gascon, full of the hot blood and boastful speech for which his countrymen are proverbial. He first courted the baroness, but, receiving no encouragement, changed his wooing to Célimène. She, with her innate coquetry, led him on to hope for success, but one fine morning quietly informed him that her choice was made, and that she would bestow her hand upon the commander. The chevalier is furious, declares to the countess that he will show her that a gentleman of his standing cannot be so treated with impunity; that she shall not marry the commander; that to prevent her so doing he will have recourse to prudence, deceit and force; the scaling ladder and the narcotic. He rushes from her presence furious, seeks the commander, insults him, and provokes a duel, wherein the unfortunate commander is hit in body, limbs and head, and falls, declaring that nothing can stand against the rapier of the furious Gascon. Célimène, in despair, sees that she must pour oil on the troubled waters, and sends the baroness with tender messages on her part to the chevalier. He, on seeing the baroness, feels his old affection revive in full force, and, fancying that she delivers on her own behalf the tender messages wherewith she is charged by her sister, falls at her feet and pours forth his passionate vows. The baroness is delighted, as she sees a way of relieving her sister, and she has a weakness for the chevalier, whom she regrets having refused. She therefore encourages him and accepts his hand; the commander weds Célimène, and so ends the opera. The libretto is exceedingly well written by M. BOSIER, the phraseology is neat, pointed, and terse, situations well worked out, and the plot clearly developed. The music is lively and replete with the comic element. The opening chorus from the twelve aspirants leads at once in *medias res*, the melody serving in a duet for the two sisters, which follows.

M. BATAILLE, as the Commander, sang and acted extremely well; and M. JOURDAN, in the Gascon chevalier, presented an admixture of true passion and exaggerated ardor, full of buffoonery, while he sang like an artist, as usual. Mme. MIOLAN (Célimène) sang brilliantly, and was a good specimen of the tantalizing coquette, fair and cruel, inspiring love and hate at once; but she could not look the character. Mme. COLSON (Baroness), exhibited talents of no mean order; and the chorus of the Twelve Lovers was what a chorus should always be; what it generally is at the Opera-Comique, and seldom elsewhere.

The *Lisette* of M. Ortolan is the daughter of a Norman magistrate. The curtain rises on a group of peasants gathering apples and gay with cider, which, like their song, has been somewhat sour. The drum beats, and the youth of the district come forth to draw lots for the Conscription. Germain draws a blank, and remains at home; Moisy draws a prize—if it be one—and becomes one of the defenders of his country. A demoiselle of a neighboring chateau, lately arrived from Paris, next appears on the stage, and, being unacquainted with the beauties of her own domain, takes Lisette for her guide. This demoiselle loves and is beloved by the Count de Thalhoub, but her "cruel parents" have chosen for her the Marquis de Gerville, newly arrived in the district as commander of a recruiting party. The marquis, however, has no idea of marriage, being a thorough unbeliever in the sex; and, on his first introduction to the young countess, proposes to her a rendezvous at midnight in a neighboring ruin. She is furious at the insult, but, concealing her wrath, consults Lisette who advises her to avenge so gross an outrage, and offers to

change dresses with her, and go to the place assigned. Midnight arrives, and with it the marquis and Lisette, the countess being concealed among the ruins. The marquis presses his love with so much warmth and affection as to alarm Lisette, the false countess, who thereupon proceeds to administer to him some vigorous *soufflets*, well delivered, after which she takes to her heels and to flight. Next day the marquis boasts everywhere of his *bonnes fortunes*, which, coming to the ears of Thalhoub, he demands an explanation, and Lisette declares it was she, and not the countess, who received the kiss and administered the blow. But the explanation falls like a thunderbolt on the head of poor Germain, the lover of Lisette, who, in despair at his mistress's infidelity, takes Moisy's place and departs for the wars. The last act takes us to a chateau of the young countess, near Paris. She has been accompanied by Lisette, who grieves at the loss of Germain; he becomes a captain in the French army, still maintains his affection for Lisette, though he still believes her culpable. However, at length the countess unveils the mystery, and all the lovers are united and made happy. The music is that of a composer with original ideas, but inexperienced in his art. There is too much emphasis in his instrumentation, and too much noise throughout.

April 28.—On Monday, April 30th, the vigil of the Exhibition, a grand performance will take place, in the Church of Saint Eustache, of "Te Deum," composed for the occasion by M. Hector Berlioz, who will conduct the orchestra. The executants will number 950; namely, 800 in the chorals, and 150 in the orchestra, which will contain most of the best instrumentalists in Paris. After the "Te Deum," Mr. Henry Smart, who comes from London expressly, will play various selections from Handel on the new organ just built for the church by M. Ducroquet. On the same day the new chapels, painted by some of our best artists, will be thrown open to the public for the first time.

Considerable discussion arose in the committee on the Budget, respecting a proposition of one of its members. He desired that subventions should be granted to one theatre in each of the large provincial towns of Lille, Rouen, Bordeaux, Lyons, Marseilles, Toulouse, and Strasbourg, the latter town being, with the exception of Paris, the only one in France whose theatre receives state assistance. This subvention was supported on the ground that the provinces have a fair right to some portion of the national funds so lavishly expended on the theatres of the capitol, of whose good fortune they are not a little jealous. The pupils of the various *conservatoires* might then be sent to make their *débuts* at those theatres, whereby they would be somewhat prepared for the terrible ordeal of facing a Parisian audience. No result ensued from the discussion; but it is by no means improbable that the large provincial theatres of France will, ere long, enjoy considerable subventions.

Meanwhile I believe it is settled that the Italian Opera will be open three times a week during the summer, and that the city of Paris will grant a considerable subvention to the manager who has been bold enough to undertake the speculation, which will probably terminate in a heavy loss.

### London.

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.—On Saturday, May 5th, LA-BLACHE made his first appearance this season as Dr. Dulcamara in *L'Elisir d'Amore*. Mme. BOSIO was Adina; Sig. GARDONI, Nemorino; and GRAZIANI, Belcore. Rossini's *Il Conte Ory* followed, for the fifth time, and seems to have given more and more delight. Then followed the last work of "Young Italy's" idol, the *Trovatore*. We give the *Musical World's* account of it:

In the accumulation of horrors the *Trovatore* gives the sack even to *Rigoletto*. But the terrible earnestness of the last scene of *Rigoletto* had redeemed a multitude of sins. The final scene of *Il Trovatore* is horrible without relief, and ineffective in the bargain.

Signor Verdi so frequently "surpassed himself," that we looked forward to much pleasure from the music of *Il Trovatore*, where he is said to have "surpassed himself" once more. I am apparently written with more care than the majority of his works; the unisons are fewer; and the desire to give a true dramatic interest to the scene is more manifest. On the other hand—which surprised us—the tunes are not so frequent as in his former operas. Much of the music of *Il Trovatore*, however, has character, is often pleasing, oftener well adapted to the situations, and occasionally in point of freedom and breadth—for example, the air *Ah! ben mio*, in the third act, so magnificently sung by Sig. TAMBERLIK—worthy of unqualified praise. The audience, though favorably disposed towards the work and its composer, were not roused to enthusiasm. There were only two encores. Nevertheless, the friends of Sig. Verdi never had greater cause to be satisfied. Nothing was left undone by the management to ensure a perfect execution and complete success.

The singers acquitted themselves admirably. It was Mme. VIARDOT's first appearance. The part of Azucena suits her, and the music lies well for her voice. The dramatic energy and artistic feeling of Mme. Viardot were exhibited to evident advantage. The scene where Azucena makes the confession to Manrico was intense and powerful, and made a deep impression.

Mlle. JENNY NEY appears to greater advantage as Verdi's Leonora than as the Leonora of Beethoven.—

Her acting was natural, and occasionally forcible and earnest. Her singing, too, was greatly to be admired, and frequently elicited the approbation of the audience. Mlle. Jenny Ney, by her execution of the music, showed herself a thorough proficient in the modern Italian *bravura* school, and sang with admirable facility.

Of Signor Tamberlik's singing and acting it is impossible to speak too highly. He was magnificent, and electrified the house in more than one scene.

The *ballata*, sung behind the scenes, at intervals with the choral "Miserere," in the last act, was given with such expression and tenderness that a unanimous encore ensued. The scenes with Leonora in the third act, and Azucena in the fourth, were equally fine and impressive. In the concerted music, Signor Tamberlik's voice produced all the effect the composer could possibly have contemplated.

Signor GRAZIANI, in the Conte di Luna, displayed to more advantage than ever his singularly fine voice and the apathy of his manner. He was encored in the *cavatina* (second act), *Il balen del suo sorriso*—one of the most popular airs of the opera; but hardly produced the *furore* ascribed to him in Paris. He does not improve as an actor. In the little part of Ferrando (played by M. Gassier in Paris), Signor TAGLIAFICO was all that could be wished, and gave the descriptive *scena* (Act I.) like a true artist.

## Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, JUNE 2, 1855.

### Italian Opera.

*Lucrezia Borgia* on Friday, and "William Tell," for the third time, on Saturday afternoon, completed the performances of last week at the Boston Theatre. Our stay was limited to the first act of *Lucrezia*: but we heard enough to convince us that this happiest and best-wearing opera of DONIZETTI was never, as a whole, cast so effectively upon any Boston stage. Report (of the appreciative) confirms the promise of the opening act, or Prologue. STEFFANONE, to be sure, is not GRISI; yet the fresh recollection of the Grisi did not make one indifferent to the very high excellence of her lyric impersonation, which includes soul, action, voice and execution, blended and inspired to one dramatic and artistic end. In neither was the voice in very perfect preservation; but in both you feel that the voice always answers to the lightning summons of passion. Steffanone is indeed the greater vocalist, and there is that sympathetic, truly lyric quality in her tones, that makes them go to the mark and tell, in spite, as we have said before, of any tremolo or hoarseness. Her contrast of the mother's tenderness and of the insulted Borgia's pride and rage in the first scene, was, both as singing and as action, admirably true and beautiful and touching.

Sig. BRIGNOLI, the young new tenor, was not a BENEDETTI, nor a MARIO, as Edgardo. Yet it was altogether a very pleasing and sufficient rendering, save a feebleness in his highest notes, which in the strong concerted passages were frequently drowned by the rough blasts of the trombones. He is a youth of rather an elegant and distinguished presence, although his stage gait was awkward; his voice is sweet, fresh, flexible, sympathetic, and of good volume, sometimes reminding one of Mario's by a certain elasticity of tone, and capable of some strong, effective outbursts. He sings with taste and feeling, and (to his credit be it said) is given to a simple, faithful, unembellished rendering of the music of his author. We needed not to wait the appearance of BADIALI as the Duke, to know that we have never had that part better done. The charming picturesque rôle of Maffeo Orsini defines itself so satisfactorily in the first act, that one needed not to witness more to estimate the

peculiar aptitude therefor of the new and beautiful contralto Signorina VESTALI. The nobleness and refined elegance of her tall figure, with the beauty of her head and face; the tastefulness and rigorous propriety of her Venetian male costume, and the freedom, grace and animation of her movements, made her look a sort of beau ideal of the character. Her voice in its ordinary range is of a fresh and pleasing quality, though not remarkable. Nor is her singing, although she has fair execution and expression, and sang (so long as we heard her) in tune,—which was not always the case as we remembered her one evening in New York. She commands some remarkably strong, mannish low notes, which she seems too much tempted to employ, because they win that loud applause which always follows any feat, that is exceptional, although not pleasing to the cultivated ear, and not æsthetic. We must confess, with all the charms of the Vestali, we liked not the low notes, either on the score of beauty or expression. It is true they were powerful; it is true that with the eyes closed we might have thought it a man's, or a full grown boy's voice; which doubtless charmed some listeners, as marvellously suited to the part; but the true ends of Art would have been better served by expending upon the legitimate voice the pains taken in developing a monster contralto. Yet taking her all in all, we must admit, that we have never witnessed a more fascinating Orsini.

When to four such principals we add Sig. COLETTI as Gubetta, and such better than average singers as filled the parts of the various nobles, whose voices are so essential in the rich concerted music of that first scene; when we add so large, well-voiced and well-trained a chorus, and so effective (would that it were not sometimes much too effective) an orchestra, with the ever-at-home, sure MARETZK for the conductor; also a crowded audience, familiar with the piece and always happy to recall its musical richness and dramatic completeness,—we may safely say that even without GRISI and MARIO, without TRUFFI and BENEDETTI, without BOSIO and BETTINI, we had yet the materials of a more perfect presentation than this opera ever enjoyed here before. So it was generally felt to be, the further it went on, and we hear a call on all sides for a repetition.

But we should neglect a duty, if we did not mention one most serious draw-back; namely the overwhelming, deafening crash of the brass instruments, lashed up to furious *fortissimo* in all the stronger passages. We could actually feel the hoarse and angry waves of sound smite and thump upon the walls of the auditorium behind us, and rebound thence on our private tympanum. Bad enough in itself, but doubly bad, when it so drowned the voices of the central persons in those spirited *ensembles* of the first act, that you only *saw* their singing. We suppose there is something in the whole tendency of modern Italian Opera which leads a conductor unconsciously into the habit of exaggerating all the powerful signs of expression, of employing all the musical intensives to get up all the excitement possible upon the least occasion. It is a sort of musical *swearing*; a taking of great names in vain, a borrowing of emphasis so often and so thoughtlessly that nothing any more can be emphatic. "O, reform it altogether."

"William Tell" again, Saturday afternoon, delighted a large audience, composed very much of ladies. The musician and the cultivated amateur have found more in it for sense and soul to feast upon, than in all the common run of Italian operas. In spite of its length and in spite of the curtailments, those who have heard it repeatedly have found the charm of its wholesome subject and its fresh, vigorous, original, rich music growing on them greatly. After two such happy inspirations as this and *Lucrezia Borgia*, wide as the distance is between them, how was it possible that there should be crowds and enthusiasm about —

Well what about *Il Trovatore*? What of VERDI's "last and greatest," after a second hearing, and in Boston? Of the performance, as compared with that first one in New York, we may say, better; of the music we can only say the same. Of the reception, it was warmly demonstrative enough to warrant the eulogistic passion of the newspapers, and the "tremendous successes" and "immense enthusiasms" of the next day's advertisements; yet the audience warmed slower than in New York. There was plenty of applause; but this, as usual, was meant more for the singers than for the composer, more for the stage effect, the scenery, the gipsies, anvils, &c., than for the music. We have been even agreeably disappointed in meeting so many who were proof against the loud assault of Verdi-ism.

But the singers made the best of it, and even in this ungrateful music added to their laurels. STEFFANONE threw all her power of voice and soul into her part of Leonora, and was enthusiastically applauded. Yet it was a severe task for her; the music and the situations kept her voice continually on the strain, demanding her utmost strength and volume; it is a part with no repose; and consequently her hoarse low tones conveyed ere-long a painful sense of effort. VESTALI, as the gipsy mother, did not this time disguise the youthful beauty of her face, and was dressed more tastefully, though perhaps less gipsy-like than in New York. She displayed a great intensity of tragic action, though of a somewhat studied kind; and indeed how could one expect much naturalness in the impersonation of a character, whose ruling motives are an ever haunting imagination of being burned at the stake, mingled with a mad thirst for revenge! Much of her music was finely sung; the mannish low tones could not be said to be out of character in a rôle that is altogether unnatural; and yet contrasted with that fair maiden face, with the æsthetic ideal suggested by so beautiful a presence, they appealed more to the superstitious associations of witchcraft and gipsies, than to the artistic feeling.

Sig. AMODIO, as the Count di Luna, a man heavily moulded physically, put a great deal of fire and energy into his part, and sang the music with a fresh, strong, ringing baritone, of which no note was ever lost. Sig. BRIGNOLI's musical, true tenor continued to grow upon his audience. His serenade in the first act: *Deserto sulla terra*; his duet with Azucena, and his strain heard from the prison tower, amid the pauses of the *Miserere*,—which are among the few *sweet* passages of the music—were sung with good style and pathos. These four were so well seconded by subordinates and chorus, as well as by scenery and costume,

that the performance as a whole was about as effective as Verdi's best admirer could have wished. Of course there were those, and not a few, with whom it took marvellously, and the managers saw their interest in repeating it on Wednesday night, and in announcing it again ("for the last time") for this afternoon.

With regard to the music of *Il Trovatore*, we must still say, what we know that many of the thoughtful ones in these audiences have felt as deeply as ourselves—(and by thoughtful ones we do not mean those who regard music from a cold, scholastic point of view, but those who have "warmth and imagination" enough to feel, accept, enjoy whatever in Art does truly address itself to these qualities of our nature)—that it is a kind of music which aims simply to create excitement; it makes its appeal as to a jaded and blasé appetite; it does not trust our wholesome, simple sense of beauty, nor seek to approach us through our every-day and natural sensibilities.

It must excite, astonish, startle, even terrify, and in the momentary outburst of applause which follows the identifying of such shocks with musical means and processes, it finds its cheap triumph. To do this it must assault the senses with loud and powerful effects; with brazen *fortissimos*; with short, strongly marked dance rhythms, as the tragedy deepens; with hard-enamelled, flinty unisons, where passion would fain seem at the white heat; with ominous *tremolos* of the orchestra accompanying the recitatives. That Verdi has his own peculiar cut of melody, from *Ernani* downward, (*vein* we can scarcely call it, for it does not freely flow), and that this melody is brilliant, is ingenious, is effective, no one will deny. But it is *hard* melody; his musical ideas come upon you steel-clad; they are knights in armor, with their visors down; they may excite your young romantic fancy, they may overthrow you with their shock, but you feel not their warm human embrace, and their soul speaks not to your soul through their eyes. It is a kind of music which leaves the heart cold. We hear the opera through, we are surprised, sometimes excited, sometimes pleased; we go away, and what has it left with us? Has it deposited anywhere in the recesses of our memory and our soul any of those honeyed secretions of melody and fancy and fine feeling, which will flow out unbidden ever and anon as long as we live, to remind us of a rich and deep experience? We doubt it. Since we have heard *Don Giovanni*, since we have heard "William Tell," &c., &c., it has been as if perennial flowers of music were implanted evermore within us. But if strains of *Il Trovatore* haunt us, it is more as in annoying dreams, like impressions stamped upon the senses, but still unaccepted by the soul.

#### Death of Sir Henry Bishop.

This most popular and most voluminous, if not in every sense the greatest English composer, after PURCELL, died on the first of May, at about the age of seventy-two. He has been chiefly known of late years by his fine Glees and Choruses, many of which are still sung and admired, and will ever rank among the best works of their kind. But he has also had his day as a composer of English operas, which were much in vogue among his countrymen, before the new passion for Italian Opera made all such things seem antiquated. There is a list of some seventy operas, operettas, ballets, &c., of which he was the author, wholly or in part, between the years 1806 and 1824. Some account of these was given in our Journal for May 5th. He was long a leader in the musical affairs of England and shared all the honors. He was a Director of the Philharmonic Society from its foundation, and for some years Conductor of the Concerts of



Ancient Music. He was professor of Music in the Universities of Edinburgh and Oxford, Member of the Royal Academy of Music, and was knighted by the Queen in 1842 (the only composer, it is said, on whom that order has been conferred). In 1820 he was tendered the freedom of the city of Dublin. In 1836 he married the lady who is so widely known in this country as Madame ANNA BISHOP. Of this unhappy union and the consequent separation there has been perhaps enough said. The cause commonly assigned was, that Madame, being a fine singer and having been educated at the Academy, desired to sing in public, and that her husband was opposed. A son and daughter by this marriage are both living.

Bishop is said to have earned more money than any other English composer; yet he died in a state of great pecuniary embarrassment. For some months previous to his death, there had been strong appeals made in the papers to the patriotic pride and gratitude of English music-lovers, and a series of benefit concerts, chiefly of his own compositions, was commenced in Hanover Square and Exeter Hall, by Mr. MITCHELL, who has also exerted himself to organize similar series in all the principal towns of England. One or more of these concerts was conducted by Sir Henry in person, which led to vain hopes of his recovery. The *Times*, in forwarding this appeal, had the following appreciative remarks on his artistic career and character as a composer.

It cannot be asserted that Bishop was an idle man, or that he did not work hard to communicate all he possessed. No English musician has composed so much—few so well, as Henry Bishop; and probably none has produced so many things that are likely to endure. In every house where music, more especially vocal music, is a welcome guest, the name of Bishop has long been and must long remain a household word. For these reasons we feel it a strong duty to plead his cause, and to proclaim him among those who are entitled to consideration for the benefits they have conferred. Who that has been soothed by the sweet melody of 'Blow gentle gales,' charmed by the measures of 'Lo! here the gentle lark,' enlivened by the animated strains of 'Foresters, sound the cheerful horn,' touched by the sadder music of 'The winds whistle cold'—who that has been haunted by the insinuating tunes of 'Tell me, my heart,' 'Under the greenwood tree,' or 'Where the wind blows,' which Rossini, the minstrel of the South was wont to love so well—who that has felt sympathy with

'As it fell, upon a day,  
In the merry month of May,'

admired that masterpiece of glee and chorus, 'The chough and crow,' or been moved to jollity at some convivial feast by 'Mynheer Van Dunck,' the most original and genial of comic glees, will not be grieved to hear that the inventor of them all—and they were all included in Monday night's programme, with so many more of equal merit and beauty—is in sickness and distress, without money, and no longer able to toil for it, deprived indeed of ALL 'that should accompany old age?'

To this we may add a few sentences from the obituary notice in the London *Musical World*:

That we have had and have more accomplished and learned musicians than BISHOP is unquestionable; but that we ever could boast, with the single exception of PURCELL, a composer so individual and so identified with the sentiment of English national melody, is equally doubtful. BISHOP was a melodist only; while ARNE did so little which can last, that we only remember him as the author of "Rule Britannia," "Where the bee sucks," some of the airs in *Midas*, and an opera after the manner of his day—an imitation and not a very good one. But Bishop was not

\* Artaxerxes.

merely genuine; he was prolific, and produced a great many things that are likely to endure as long as the Art itself, which, after all, can only be said of a few composers. The melody of Bishop was a pure flowing spring that had its source in nature, and was, therefore, a gift from above.

Bishop was not, like Purcell, a discoverer; he did little, in short, to advance the Art; but he added to the stores of wealth which are heaped in Music's granaries, and among the minstrels of his time his harp was ever of the sweetest and most silvery. His tune was varied and abundant. Now gay, now sad, now grave, now humorous, it ever flowed spontaneously. His vein of melody, as in the instance of far greater masters than himself, seems to open without an effort. Nothing forced, exaggerated, square cut, or otherwise uncongenial, was to be traced in his productions—we allude, of course, to his best, not the mere chaff of his labors, but the good grain from which time has sifted it.

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